

To S. J. May.

Boston, Jan. 5, 1841.

My dear Brother:

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It is not too late to wish you a happy new year — the happiest you have ever yet known. O, that the whole earth were filled with happiness! O, that poor, diseased, miserable, depraved man, as a race, was redeemed from all iniquity, that henceforth he might lead a blissful existence! What can make us happy but the love of God shed abroad in our souls — that love which "worketh no ill to his neighbor, and is the fulfilling of the law"? The soul that delights in God is happy, come what may — even in the midst of adversity, suffering, persecution, martyrdom. It is in this sense that we are conquerors, and more than conquerors, through Him who hath loved us, and given himself for us.

On New Year's Day, how many unmeaning wishes are expressed by community for the happiness of each other! If those wishes were really sincere — if they were based upon disinterested benevolence — the whole state of human society would be almost immediately regenerated — all crime, all poverty, all misery, would disappear. It is, too often, a mere form of words — a form which, while it seems to partake of kindness, is rather an exhibition of human selfishness. — But I did not take up my pen to moralize.

Our annual meeting, you know, is swiftly approaching. We shall, of course, make application for the Hall of the House of Representatives for one evening, on that occasion, and there is no reason to doubt that it will be granted to us, as usual.

Loring and Quincy have signified their willingness to speak on the occasion; and I want you to be ready to do so, also. The several speeches ought not to occupy more than half an hour each, so that we may have as many speakers as practicable. You can prepare a resolution on any topic you choose, and speak to it. As the meeting is to be in the State House, before Senators and Representatives, it might be well to hold up the encroachments of slavery upon the rights, liberties and interests of the people of the north, and to show the necessity of a speedy and an absolute dissolution of co-partnership between Liberty and Slavery, as now existing in this country. But suit yourself as to this matter - only consent to be one of the speakers.

I give you this early invitation, in order that you may have some little ^{time} to prepare yourself, if any be needed. We shall have, I trust, a good anniversary. Let old Plymouth send a good strong delegation, with father Sprague at the head. How far Mr. Bishop intends to give us trouble, I do not know; but he is very obstinate and wayward - and, having publicly committed himself, will no doubt do what he can to make trouble. We shall try to be prepared for every emergency. Don't fail to be on hand.

Helen and the children are in good health, and also mother. We desire to be cordially remembered to ~~the~~ ^{you} May, and regret that we have not yet had the promised visit from her. Will she not come up to the annual meeting.

Yours, affectionately,

Wm. Lloyd Garrison.

Quincy
Sept 1840
Canaan